

That Which is Claimed

1. A method of distributing movies to customer households comprising the steps of:

5 blanket transmitting a plurality of movies to customer households in compressed digital form at faster than real time transmission rates;

10 permitting a plurality of customer households to preselect and record desired movies in compressed digital form on a high capacity storage medium;

15 permitting a plurality of customer households to play back for viewing from the high capacity storage medium a recorded movie selected by the customer household;

20 communicating movie playback information from customer households to a central controller system with respect to movies that are actually played back from the high capacity storage medium for viewing;

25 billing customer households for those recorded movies that are actually played back from the high capacity storage medium for viewing;

permitting customer households to create copies of movies recorded on the high capacity storage medium on removable media to serve as library or remote play copies; and

30 billing customer households for the privilege of playing back for viewing movies that have been recorded on the removable media.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein the removable media on which library or remote play copies are made are selected from the group consisting of CD's and DVD's.

3. The method of claim 1 wherein the removable media on which library or remote play copies are made are CD's that are read by a laser having a wavelength shorter than about 530 nM.

4. The method of claim 3 wherein the laser wavelength is on the order of 410 nM.

5. The method of claim 3 wherein the laser is formed using a wide band gap material.

6. The method of claim 1 wherein the step of creating copies of movies recorded on the high capacity storage medium on removable media is carried out in a companion set-top box that is connected to a satellite or cable TV receiver box.

7. The method of claim 1 wherein the step of blanket transmitting is carried out by direct broadcast satellite transmission.

8. A system for distributing movies to customer households comprising:

a data transmission system blanket transmitting a plurality of movies to customer households in compressed digital form at faster than real time transmission rates;

a user station at each of a plurality of customer households, the user station including:

means permitting the customer household to preselect desired transmitted movies for recording;

a receiver and associated high capacity storage medium for recording movies in compressed digital form;

a playback device for playing back from the hard drive those recorded movies that the customer household desires to view;

a central controller system having a database for storing therein an address corresponding to each customer household;

a communications link between customer households and the central controller system to verify to the central controller system that a recorded movie has been played back from the high capacity storage medium for viewing;

a removable media read/write device for creating copies of movies recorded on the hard drive on removable media to serve as library or remote play copies;

a billing system associated with the central controller system to bill customer households for those recorded movies that are played back from the high capacity storage medium for viewing and for billing customer households for the privilege of playing back movies that have been recorded on the removable media.

9. The system of claim 8 wherein the removable media read/write device is a CD read/write device.

10. The system of claim 9 wherein the CD read/write device includes a laser reader having a wavelength less than about 530 nM.

11. The system of claim 10 wherein the laser wavelength is on the order of 410 nM.

12. The system of claim 10 wherein the laser is formed using a wide band gap material.

13. The system of claim 8 wherein the removable media read/write device is a DVD read/write device.

14. The system of claim 8 wherein the removable media read/write device is contained in a companion set-top box that is connected to a satellite or cable TV receiver box.

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